

addition that collection has specimens from Klaver, C.P.; the male taken on 4th October 1917 has the wings and tail in full moult and the unsexed bird taken the next day shows no moult at all. It appears that in *O. nabouroup* breeding and the complete moult occur simultaneously. This may be an adaptation to take advantage of the short periods in their arid habitat when feeding is very easy but more evidence than is at present available is needed to prove it.

In this connection I have received a letter from Mr. E. Joubert, a biologist employed by the South African Parks Board and working in the Kaokoveld in north-western South West Africa. He points out that *O. nabouroup* normally occurs between the 100 and 300 mm. isohyets. In the Kaokoveld most rain (what little there is) falls between January and March but that there is a spring flush of vegetation in September independent of rainfall. During the dry weather insects are scarce and berries are non-existent. The September flush of vegetation makes little difference to this situation but during the rains both are abundant. Joubert also points out that a post nuptial moult in April to August besides taking place during a time of increasing scarcity of food would occur during the period when minimum night temperatures range between 30° and 38° F. Since other birds moult successfully at very low temperatures when food is abundant I would suppose that the short period of abundant food is the reason for the tendency for moult and breeding in *O. nabouroup* to coincide.

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What is *Serinus 'flavigula'*?

by A. L. RAND

Received 20th May, 1968

In preparing the section on African canaries for the forthcoming volume of Peters' *Check-list*, it became necessary to decide on the status of the three names proposed for certain little known canaries from Abyssinia which more or less resemble one or the other of the local forms of *S. atrogularis* except for having a yellow throat patch. These are:

(a) *Serinus flavigula* Salvadori, 1888, *Ann. Mus. Genova*, 26, p. 272.—Ambokarra, Shoa. (Three specimens in all, the others from Malcaghebdu and Aigaber). Described as without white on top or sides of head, and with

no black band across yellow throat patch: wing 66, tail 46-49, culmen 9 mm.

(b) *Serinus collaris* Reichenow, 1905, Ornith. Monatsb., 13, p. 146.—Karaju on River Mane, Gurra-land, [Abyssinian Somaliland] (apparently two specimens). Described as having a black bar across yellow throat patch. There is no mention of white forehead nor of white superciliaries, although Erlanger's coloured plate (*Journ. f. Ornith.*, 1907, pl. I, fig. 1, a and b) shows an indication of a white forehead: wing 64, tail 48, bill 9-10 mm.

(c) *Serinus dimidiata* Madarasz, 1912, Ornith. Monatsb., 20, p. 45.—Tale Gara Mullasa, [central Abyssinia] (apparently two specimens, another from Bisidino). Described as having a dull white forehead and a black bar across yellow throat patch: wing 65-70, tail 47-50.

Additional specimens are few and apparently no populations have been discovered. Benson collected one, listed as *flavigula*, the only specimen he saw in southern Abyssinia near Yavello where *S. a. reichenowi* was common but no *mozambicus* (*Ibis*, 1947, p. 47) and said it was easily distinguished from *reichenowi*, having greyer upperparts and a yellow throat-breast patch with a dark line across it. Commenting on this specimen, the only one available in the British Museum, Mrs. B. P. Hall and M. P. S. Irwin say it has no white superciliary line. (*Ibis* 1960, p. 504). They also mention specimens of *reichenowi* from Tanganyika with some yellow wash on underparts and the white of head.

Field Museum of Natural History has an unrecorded specimen, a male in fresh plumage, collected by A. M. Bailey at Sheik Hussein, Bali, Abyssinia on 17th December, 1926. This has a conspicuous white forehead (no superciliary) and a yellow throat-upper breast patch crossed near its posterior margin by a line of blackish brown marks forming a necklace: wing 69, tail 47, culmen 9 mm. This specimen thus has the characters of *dimidiata*. It is slightly greyer above than one Abyssinian specimen of *S. a. reichenowi* and one of *xanthopygius*. However, compared with *S. a. reichenowi* from near Addis Ababa, the only difference of moment is the presence of the yellow on throat and lack of a white superciliary.

Before discussing these birds further, it is advisable to review the characters of the two races of *S. atrogularis* occurring in Abyssinia.

(a) *S. a. xanthopygius* Rüppell.

Eritrea and northern Abyssinia, probably meeting the next in Shoa. No white in forehead nor in superciliaries; throat white, sharply bounded by the ochraceous grey of breast; no yellow; no blackish necklace: wing 69, tail 46, culmen 9 mm. (one specimen Field Museum) (Reichenow's measurements, *Vog. Afr.* 3, p. 254, are: wing 70-73, tail 50, bill 9 mm.)

(b) *S. a. reichenowi* Salvadori.

From parts of Shoa south to Kenya and Tanzania. Conspicuous white forehead and long superciliaries, throat white, bordered posteriorly by a row of blackish brown markings forming a necklace. (No yellow on throat or breast.) Wing 66-69, tail 43-45, culmen 9 mm. Three specimens from central Abyssinia. These agree in general with a series of 35 specimens from Kenya, but the latter birds show minor differences in coloration and size).

Presumably the two forms meet and intergrade or hybridize somewhere in Shoa, but the manner of such postulated meeting is not recorded.

The three yellow-throated 'species' were listed by Sclater, 1930, *Syst.*

Av. Aethiop., p. 822, as three species, with the comment that they might be races of one species, *flavigula*, or they might be mutants of *atrogularis*. Current texts list all three yellow-throated forms in a single monotypic species, *flavigula* (White, 1963, *Revised Check-list of African Flycatchers—Finches*—, p. 109). Hall and Irwin (*loc. cit.*) speak of them as possible intermediates or hybrids between *S. atrogularis* and *S. mozambicus* or possible aberrant *atrogularis*. They discuss this in relation to the Portuguese East African birds since described as *S. citrinipectus* Clancey and Lawson, 1960. Later, Irwin, (1961, *Durban Mus. Novit.* 6, pp. 138–9) discusses 'flavigula', its possible relationship with *S. dorsostriatus*, and concludes that *flavigula* is best considered a localized monotypic species, as is *citrinipectus*, although this latter exhibits variations that suggest it is polytypic. (*op. cit.*, p. 141).

The range of the yellow-throated birds 'flavigula' must extend at least for more than 300 miles from north to south, Yavello to Shoa, and east to Gurra-land. It is apparently completely within part of the ranges of *S. a. xanthopygius* and *S. a. reichenowi* and apparently *S. mozambicus* is absent from this area.

Certain northern or central specimens are quite similar to those of *xanthopygius* except for having the yellow throat. Certain central-southern specimens resemble *reichenowi*, except for the presence of the yellow-throat and the lack of white superciliary and sometimes, apparently the lack of the white forehead.

Measurements are summarized as follows:

	Wing	Tail	Culmen
<i>flavigula</i> Salv.	66	46–49	9
<i>collaris</i> Reich.	64	48	9–10
<i>dimidiata</i> Madar.	65–70	47–50	
<i>dimidiata</i>	69	47	9
(1 FMNH spec.)			
<i>xanthopygius</i>	69	46	9
(1 FMNH spec.)			
<i>xanthopygius</i> Reich.	70–73	50	9
<i>reichenowi</i>	66–69	43–45	9 mm.
(3 FMNH spec.)			

I incline to the view that these birds are yellow-throated aberrant specimens or mutants of *S. atrogularis* in eastern Abyssinia. The northern birds are mutants of *S. a. xanthopygius* without a 'necklace', the more southern birds of *S. a. reichenowi* with a 'necklace'. This concept indicates both their inter-relationships and that to *atrogularis*. The only discordant item is that none of the yellow-throated, necklaced birds seems to have a complete white superciliary line so constant in *S. a. reichenowi*. On the other hand, if this view is correct, it indicates a relationship between *xanthopygius* and *reichenowi*, in addition to apparent allopatric distribution and the postulated intergrading. Only a field study can settle this matter. In the meantime, I suggest the following arrangement:

Serinus atrogularis xanthopygius Ruppell, 1840
synonym: *S. flavigula* Salvadori 1888

Serinus atrogularis reichenowi Salvadori 1888
synonyms: *S. collaris* Reichenow 1905
S. dimidiata Madarasz 1912

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A new subspecies of *Poeoptera lugubris* Bonaparte from Uganda

by STUART KEITH

Received 14th June, 1968

The Narrow-tailed Starling, *Poeoptera lugubris* Bonaparte, has previously been considered a lowland forest species, occurring from Sierra Leone eastward to the Congo and just reaching Uganda at Bwamba, a lowland forest at 2,500 feet. Recently, however, the bird has been found in higher forest in other parts of western Uganda. These highland birds differ sufficiently from the lowland birds to warrant subspecific recognition, and accordingly I name them

Poeoptera lugubris webbi, subsp. nov.

Type: Carnegie Museum No. 141,661; adult male; Impenetrable (Kayonza) Forest, Kigezi, Uganda, altitude 5,000 feet; 5th August 1960; Arthur Twomey and John Williams, collectors.

Measurement of type: Wing 98; tail 136 mm.

Description: Larger than what now becomes the nominate race. Wing measurements of nominate *lugubris* in the A.M.N.H. are: 15 males, range 89-96, average 93.13; seven females, range 84-93, average 89.3. Wing measurements of *webbi* are: 13 males, range 94-99, average 97.23; 13 females, range 90-96, average 91.92. The series of *webbi* specimens come from two forests of western Uganda, the Kibale and the Impenetrable forests. Measurements from these two places are almost identical; from the Kibale forest, five males measure: range 95-99, average 97.2; nine females, range 90-96, average 92. From the Impenetrable forest, eight males, range 94-99, average 97.25 four females, range 90-95, average 91.75.

Tail length in this species is so variable as to be useless for taxonomic purposes. For instance, tail length of the A.M.N.H. series of 15 males of nominate *lugubris* has a range of 86-128, with an average of 111.2. A single bird has a tail of 128, the next largest being 119. Apparently the long tail feathers are much subject to wear, and in some specimens some of the tail feathers have actually been broken off. I therefore consider tail measurements of little value and have not included them here.

The second character on which I base my description is a colour difference in the males. The males of *webbi* have a bluish sheen to the purple gloss of the feathers. In good light this stands out quite noticeably. Females of both races are much duller and in both races they vary a good deal as to the amount of sheen, though there is a slight tendency toward bluer sheen in *webbi*. In males there is no such variation in amount of sheen.